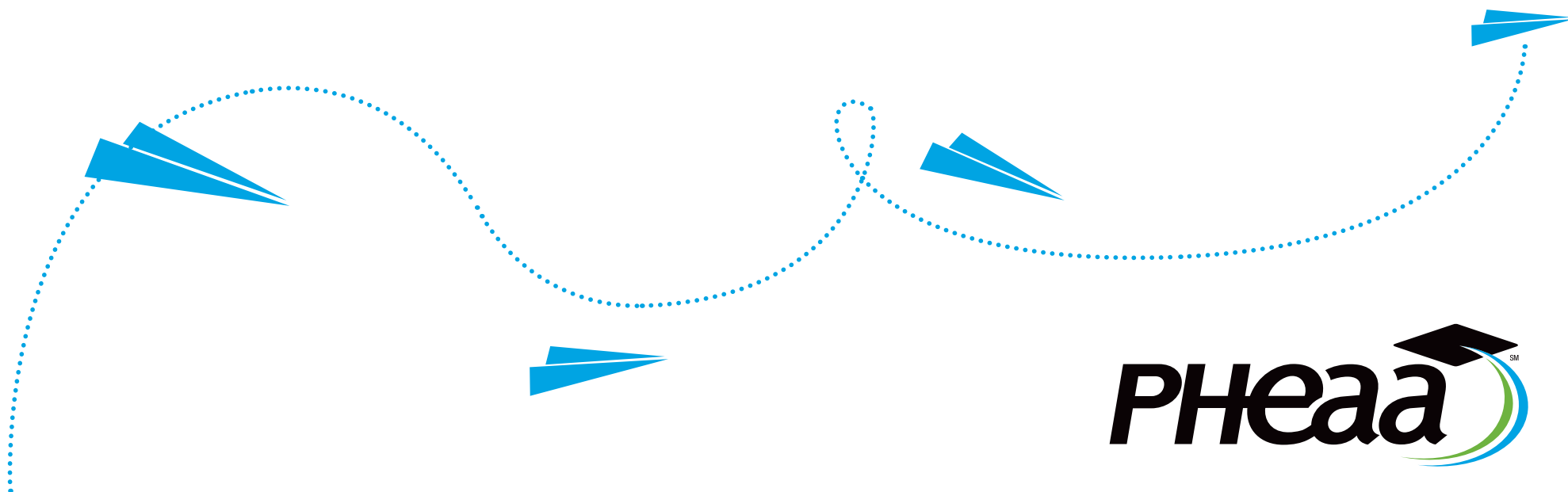


It's My Life!

CAREER GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

Online Edition

GRADES
5 - 8



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Why should I think about careers now?

NO ONE EXPECTS YOU TO DECIDE ON A CAREER RIGHT NOW. But it's time to start thinking about it. You're probably familiar with the careers of people close to you, like your parents or guardians. And there are hundreds of careers out there for you to consider. Now is the time to open your mind to all of the possibilities the world has to offer you.

Technology is quickly changing the world in which we live. Consider this – 10 years ago we had no iPods... no camera phones... no Xbox 360 or Wii. There was little online shopping, no HDTV and people weren't checking out Facebook or YouTube because they didn't exist! Now, just 10 years later, all of these things are part of our everyday life, and we can't imagine how we got along without them.

This changing technology will affect the careers of the future. The new jobs of tomorrow will use this new technology, will help people live longer and healthier lives, and will help us save the planet. Want to be a part of that? Then consider technology, health and "green" careers. Or you can choose from hundreds of traditional careers that are out there for you.

That's what this workbook is about – helping you explore careers. You are developing likes and dislikes, strengths and weaknesses. And you're probably starting to get an idea of the kinds of things you might want to do for a living. This is great because having a career in mind will help you pick your classes later in high school AND help you do better in school right now.

As you go through this workbook, keep the focus on you. What interests do you have? What careers might you like? What do you want to be? All of the answers are inside of you.

So have fun with these activities, and remember – **IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU!**



Middle School Checklist

Here are some things that you should be doing during your middle school years.

Put a check in the box for any of these things that you do:

- ☐ Work hard and do your best to become a better student.
- ☐ Learn and develop good study habits so you'll do better on tests and get better grades.
- ☐ Do your homework. Homework is practice, and this is how you get better in school.
- ☐ Read books, magazines or online articles for fun.
- ☐ Keep up on reading assignments.
- ☐ Tell your parents or guardians about what you are doing in school.
- ☐ Stay on track with schoolwork and plan ahead for deadlines.
- ☐ Get involved in sports, music, clubs or activities at your school or in your community.
- ☐ Talk with adults you know about their jobs and what they like or dislike about them.
- ☐ Think about what kind of job you would like to have some day.

- ☐ Spend more study and homework time on the subjects that are the hardest for you.
- ☐ Identify several career areas that might interest you.
- ☐ Explore what interesting courses your high school has to offer.
- ☐ Think about what you would like to do with your life after high school.
- ☐ Talk with your parents or guardians about continuing your education after high school.

How many boxes did you check? _____

You are doing a good job in these areas!

How many boxes are NOT checked? _____

These are areas you should focus on this year. Ask your parents, guardians, or guidance counselor for help if you need it.



Why Are Grades So Important?

Good grades are important! Why?

Because getting better grades can lead to having better job choices. And better job choices could lead to a better life for you.

WHAT KIND OF STUDENT AM I?

Put a check in the column that best describes your study habits.

	MOSTLY	SOMETIMES	HARDLY EVER
1) I care about doing well in school.			
2) I try my best in school each day.			
3) I do my homework.			
4) I understand things that I have read.			
5) I have the things I need for class.			
6) I get along well with my teachers.			
7) I take good notes in class.			
8) I am good at taking tests.			
9) I ask and answer questions in class.			
10) I am happy with my grades.			

GOOD STUDY HABITS = GOOD GRADES = GOOD CAREER OPTIONS = GOOD LIFE!

SCORING:

Mostly = **2 Points**, Sometimes = **1 Point**, Hardly ever = **0 Points**

Put your point total here: _____

15 – 20 Points:	You are a very good student. Keep up the good work!
10 – 14 Points:	You are doing pretty well. Keep looking for ways to do even better.
5 – 9 Points:	You are doing OK but could be doing better. Ask your teachers or counselor about ways you can improve your study habits and your grades.
0 – 4 Points:	You may be struggling in school, but you can get help. Ask your teachers or counselor about how you can do better in school.



Exploring Careers

One way to explore careers is to think about the things you like to do, and then find careers that match your interests.

On the chart below, put a check in the box next to the things you like to do. Then circle any careers that you might find interesting.

I LIKE TO:	I MIGHT LIKE THESE CAREERS:
<input type="checkbox"/> Work with my hands <input type="checkbox"/> Work with machines and tools <input type="checkbox"/> Build and fix things	Mechanic Chef Carpenter Pilot Plumber Engineer Electrician Truck Driver Firefighter
<input type="checkbox"/> Sing, act, dance or play music <input type="checkbox"/> Create things like writing or art <input type="checkbox"/> Speak or perform in front of others	Singer Photographer Musician Designer Actor or Reporter Actress Editor Writer Art Teacher
<input type="checkbox"/> Work with math and science <input type="checkbox"/> Solve problems and puzzles <input type="checkbox"/> Work with numbers and/or computers	Chemist Pharmacist Biologist Scientist Doctor Accountant Architect Web Designer Veterinarian

I LIKE TO:	I MIGHT LIKE THESE CAREERS:
<input type="checkbox"/> Lead people in doing things <input type="checkbox"/> Sell things or ideas <input type="checkbox"/> Be in charge of people	Manager Insurance Advertising Lawyer Real Estate Paralegal Stockbroker Politician Salesperson
<input type="checkbox"/> Work with numbers <input type="checkbox"/> Work in an organized way <input type="checkbox"/> Follow a set plan	Secretary Postal Clerk Bank Teller Desk Clerk Court Reporter Data Entry Bookkeeper Payroll Clerk File Clerk
<input type="checkbox"/> Help people solve problems <input type="checkbox"/> Help people feel better <input type="checkbox"/> Teach people how to do things	Nurse Insurance Teacher Lawyer Therapist Paralegal Counselor Politician Librarian

Careers That Relate to School Subjects

Knowing which courses you like best is very important when making decisions about careers. Just remember that doing well in school will give you more career options when you get older.

Take a look at the subjects below and check the ones you like. Then see how they relate to jobs that might interest you. Circle your favorites.

I LIKE:	I MIGHT LIKE THESE CAREERS:
<input type="checkbox"/> Language Arts (English, Reading, Vocabulary, Spelling, Writing)	Writer Marketing Editor Librarian Reporter News Anchor
<input type="checkbox"/> Math	Teacher Accountant Statistics Finance Engineering Computers
<input type="checkbox"/> Science	CSI Astronaut Scientist Genetics Meteorologist Conservation
<input type="checkbox"/> Social Studies (History, Geography)	Historian Archeologist Surveyor Politician Travel Agent Tour Guide
<input type="checkbox"/> Gym/Health	Coach Nutritionist Trainer Nurse Therapist Chiropractor

I LIKE:	I MIGHT LIKE THESE CAREERS:
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	Artist Art Teacher Animator Designer Photographer Landscaper
<input type="checkbox"/> Music	Singer Director Musician Producer Songwriter Agent
<input type="checkbox"/> Computer Technology	Programmer Analyst Web Design Game Design Technician Security
<input type="checkbox"/> Family & Consumer Science (Industrial Tech, Home Ec, etc.)	Mechanic Welder Chef Child Care Carpenter Cosmetologist

Things We Will Always Need

Another way to look at careers is to consider the things that we just can't do without. There are things that people are always going to need, so we will always need people to provide them for us. So think about what kinds of things people will always need, what you like to do, and what you are good at. This might help you find careers that are right for you.

Take a look at this list and circle any careers that might interest you.

WE WILL ALWAYS NEED:	CAREERS THAT PROVIDE THIS:	
● Food	Chef Cook Baker	Waiter Waitress Restaurant Owner
● Clothing	Salesperson Delivery Person	Store Manager Fashion Designer
● Shelter	Carpenter Plumber Electrician	Roofer Real Estate Agent
● Transportation	Auto Mechanic Car Salesperson Pilot	Flight Attendant Bus/Taxi/Truck Driver
● Safety	Police Officer Firefighter Paramedic	Prison Guard Military
● Personal Services	Cosmetologist Personal Trainer	Childcare Worker Massage Therapist

WE WILL ALWAYS NEED:	CAREERS THAT PROVIDE THIS:	
● Education	Teacher Teacher's Aide Counselor	Librarian Principal
● Health Care	Doctor Nurse Therapist	Home Health Aide Social Worker Dental Hygienist
● Computers	Web Specialist Technician Animator	Game Designer Systems Analyst
● Entertainment	Singer Actor Musician Producer	Writer Director TV/Radio Announcer



Career Clusters

“Career Clusters” are used to group careers together by the kind of job they are. Here is one example of a set of Career Clusters, and some of the jobs they include.

Check the box next to any clusters that might interest you, and circle any careers you might like.

<input type="checkbox"/> ADVANCED MATERIALS AND DIVERSIFIED MANUFACTURING		
Welder Sales Engineer	Mechanical Drafter Inspector or Tester	Electrical Engineering Technician Industrial Machinery Mechanic
<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE AND FOOD PRODUCTION		
Farmer Veterinarian	Agriculture Inspector Agriculture Technician	Farm Equipment Mechanic Environmental Science Technician
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION		
Painter HVAC Mechanic	Construction Manager Construction Inspector	Brick/Block Mason Excavating Machine Operator
<input type="checkbox"/> BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL SERVICES		
Bill Collector Loan Officer	Chief Executive Training Specialist	Public Relations Specialist Customer Service Representative
<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION		
College Professor School Nurse	School Counselor School Bus Driver	Special Education Teacher Adult Literacy Teacher

<input type="checkbox"/> INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION SERVICES		
Systems Engineer Technical Writer	Equipment Installer Equipment Repair	Computer Support Specialist Environmental Engineer
<input type="checkbox"/> LIFE SCIENCES		
Surgeon Zoologist	Surgical Technologist Botanist	Radiologic Technologist Pharmacy Technician
<input type="checkbox"/> LOGISTICS AND TRANSPORTATION		
Laborer Dispatcher	Bus/Truck Mechanic Heavy Truck Driver	Shipping and Receiving Clerk Transportation Supervisor
<input type="checkbox"/> LUMBER, WOOD, AND PAPER		
Forester Cabinetmaker	Forest Technician Equipment Operator	Woodworking Machine Operator Sawing Machine Operator



Career Inventory

Use this Career Inventory to help you select your high school courses and decide on which higher education option would be best for you.

These are things I learned about myself (interests, activities, favorite subjects, etc.):

These are the careers I circled on the activities I completed:

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My dreams:

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Be Excited About High School

As you look into your future, here are some tips that can make your high school years fun and successful:

- **Be Familiar** – attend your high school orientation. Not only do you get to tour the school and find out where the classrooms, gym, cafeteria and bathrooms are, but you might also get to meet some of your teachers.
- **Be Prepared** – read all of the class descriptions before you pick your high school classes. You don't want to pick something you don't like or miss out on something fun.
- **Be Involved** – there are so many more activities and things to do in high school than there are in middle school... things such as clubs, music and theatre groups, student government and sports teams. Stay involved in what you liked before but don't be afraid to try something new – you just might surprise yourself!
- **Be Ready** – high school requires studying harder, and there are more assignments than in middle school. Be ready to ask for help and talk to your teachers.
- **Be Organized** – your teachers will not remind you when assignments are due. Use a planner to mark assignments, deadlines and tests. You can keep track of what is due for all of your classes in one easy place.
- **Be Smart** – turn in your homework, pay attention in class, study and try the very best you can. Freshman year does count! Employers, colleges, tech schools and the military will check on your grades, attendance and activities – even what you did in 9th grade!
- **Be Kind** – to yourself and to others. Don't make fun of someone who is different than you – respect who they are. No one likes to be made fun of, bullied or called names.
- **Be In Control** – no one controls who you are and the things that you can do. Say “No” to alcohol, tobacco, drugs and anything else that just doesn't seem right. Be the boss of you.
- **Be Strong** – in your mind and in your heart. Stick up for what you believe in and who you are.
- **Be You!** – don't change who you are because you want to fit in or make friends. Be you no matter what everyone else around you is doing. Just kick back, be confident and most of all have fun being YOU!



College Knowledge Quiz

If you decide to go off to college or technical school, you're going to find that it's **NOTHING** like middle school or high school! You already know a lot about your school, so let's see how much you know about college.

Answer these questions True or False.

- | | |
|---|--|
| _____ College does NOT have to mean four more years of school. | _____ I might get free money from the government to help me pay for college. |
| _____ College means any kind of education or training after high school. | _____ I can borrow money for college and not pay it back until I leave college. |
| _____ I should pick a college or technical school based on the career I want. | _____ There are many jobs available to students who want to work on a college campus. |
| _____ If I go to college, I will probably get a better job with more pay. | _____ I can wait and go to college after I've been out of high school for a while. |
| _____ In college, I can take most of my classes in subjects I like. | _____ My high school teachers and counselor can help me with college applications. |
| _____ Doing well in middle school and high school will prepare me for college. | _____ My high school teachers and counselor can help me get scholarships. |
| _____ I don't have to get straight A's to get into college. | _____ I can have a lot of fun at college and still do well and get good grades. |
| _____ College will be harder than middle school and high school. | _____ I should think about colleges that are close to home, even if I want to go far away. |
| _____ Going to college is NOT like going to school from 8:00 to 3:00 each day. | |
| _____ Being active in my school and my community will help me get scholarships. | |

Answers to College Knowledge Quiz

The answer to all of these statements is true. Use them as tips to help you when you think about going on to college or technical school. Your education after high school will be very different from middle school and high school. And it can lead to great career options and a great life for you. So be sure you graduate from high school, and then look at whatever comes next for you.



Life After High School

When you hear the word “college”, it does NOT have to mean four more years of school! You have many choices for how to continue your education after high school.

- **On-the-Job Training** lets you go to work for a company or business that will pay you while they train you. Many jobs offer this option.
- **Apprenticeships** are 2–4 year programs that combine on-the-job training with technical instruction for skilled occupations. You work with an expert in the trade. This is a great option for careers such as electricians, welders and plumbers.
- **Certificate Programs** can last from two months to two years. They are usually offered at trade and technical schools or community colleges. This is a great option for careers such as heavy equipment operators, truck drivers and massage therapists.
- **Associate Degree Programs** usually take two years to complete, but some are even shorter. They are usually offered at community colleges and some technical colleges. This is a great option for careers such as dental hygienists, nurses and auto mechanics.
- **Bachelor Degree Programs** usually take four years to complete. They are offered by colleges and universities. You will need a Bachelor’s Degree to go into fields such as teaching, athletic training and engineering.
- **Graduate Programs** usually take six or more years of college. You will need a graduate degree to go into careers such as pharmacy, physical therapy and law.

- **Military Service** is a great way to serve your country while receiving pay, room and board, benefits and training. For details, talk with your parents, guardians or counselor.

WHY GET MORE EDUCATION?

People with more education or training tend to make more money. That’s why you should finish high school and then look at getting more education after high school. It can help you have better career choices and earn more money for the rest of your life!

LEVEL OF EDUCATION OR TRAINING:	HOURLY EARNINGS:
High school dropout	About \$10 an hour
High school graduate	About \$15 an hour
Education or training after high school	\$18 an hour and more

THE MORE YOU LEARN, THE MORE YOU EARN!



Going to Work

As you've researched careers, hopefully you have found some that really interest you. Some day you will be going off to work. It is very important that you have good work habits and strong character traits. Let's take a look at how you might do if you went to work TODAY.

HOW ARE YOUR WORK HABITS?

Put a check in the column that best describes your work habits.

	MOSTLY	SOMETIMES	HARDLY EVER
1) I get up on time in the morning.			
2) I get along with other people.			
3) I go to school each day.			
4) I keep my room neat and clean.			
5) I follow directions.			
6) I get homework done on time.			
7) I do what I am told to do.			
8) I get my chores done at home.			
9) I follow rules at home and at school.			
10) I do things without being asked.			

GOOD WORK HABITS + STRONG CHARACTER TRAITS = GREAT CAREER OPTIONS!

SCORING:

Mostly = **2 Points**, Sometimes = **1 Point**, Hardly ever = **0 Points**

Put your point total here: _____

15 – 20 Points: Outstanding! You have very good work habits. Keep it up!

10 – 14 Points: You are doing well but could be doing a little bit better.

5 – 9 Points: Looks like you've got some work to do to improve your work habits.

0 – 4 Points: YOU'RE FIRED! You should start improving your work habits NOW.



So what did you learn from these activities?

- Did you learn some things that will help you become a better student?
- Are you interested in going on for more education after high school?
- Do you see the connection between doing your best in school and having more career options when you're older?

Continue your college and career planning at [EducationPlanner.org](https://www.educationplanner.org)

EducationPlanner.org can help you with all of the things you learned in this workbook. You can take online quizzes that help you learn things about yourself. You can explore hundreds of exciting careers. And you can look at all kinds of education and training options. It's free, it's easy, and it's fun... and you can access it 24/7.

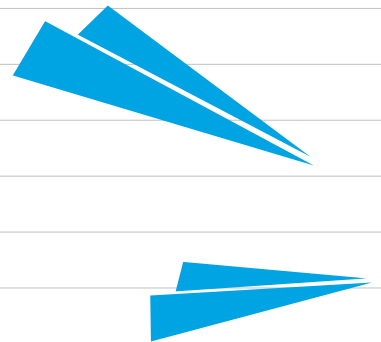
So take a look at EducationPlanner. And if you have any questions about the website, ask your teachers, counselor, parent(s) or guardian(s) for help.

IT ALL STARTS NOW!

Doing your best in school and exploring the whole world of careers will help you when it's time to...

- Choose your high school courses.
- Go on for more education and training.
- Start working in whatever career you choose.

GOOD STUDY HABITS = GOOD GRADES = GOOD CAREER OPTIONS = GOOD LIFE!



Created in 1963 by the Pennsylvania General Assembly, the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) has evolved into one of the nation's leading student aid organizations. Today, PHEAA is a national provider of student financial aid services, serving millions of students and thousands of schools through its loan guaranty, loan servicing, financial aid processing, outreach and other student aid programs.

PHEAA's earnings are used to support its public service mission and to pay its operating costs, including administration of the Pennsylvania State Grant and other state-funded student aid programs. PHEAA continues to devote its energy, resources and imagination to developing innovative ways to ease the financial burden of higher education for students, families, schools and taxpayers.

PHEAA conducts its student loan servicing activities nationally as American Education Services (AES) and FedLoan Servicing.



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